

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3691

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 0776

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC AO

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN ASSISTANCE IN AN EVACUATION OF LUANDA

PRETORIA FOR RSO; CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

REF: LUANDA 0619

1. THE REFTEL SPELLED OUT OUR INCREASINGLY MORE LIMITED EVACUATION OPTIONS AND NOTHING HAS CHANGED SINCE THEN TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION. TO THE CONTRARY, WE HAVE JUST BEEN INFORMED BY THE SOUTH AFRICANS THAT OUR IDEA TO UTILIZE THE AUTODROME 26 KM OUTSIDE LUANDA AS AN ALTERNATE LANDING FIELD IS UNFEASIBLE FOR C-130'S BECAUSE THE BACKSTRETCH CONTAINS A DIP. MOREOVER, THE GLIDER STRIP AT KM 23 IS NOW CONSIDERED BY THE SOUTH AFRICANS UNSAFE FOR C-130'S ALSO.

2. HOWEVER THE THE SOUTH AFRICANS NOW HAVE TWO FRIGATES WITH A HELICOPTER ABOARD EACH STANDING BY AT WALVIS BAY FOR POSSIBLE USE IN AN EVACUATION OF THEIR NATIONALS HERE. SAG OFFICIALS HAVE HINTED STRONGLY THAT THEY COULD AND WOULD TAKE OUT U.S. CITIZENS AT THE SAME TIME. WE HAVE NOT PURSUED THIS BECAUSE OF THE POLICY
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IMPLICATION BUT WE FEEL THIS IS THE TIME TO ADDRESS THE

ISSUE, NOT ONLY IN RELATION TO THE FRIGATES BUT ALSO
REGARDING AIR EVACUATION ON SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT
AS WELL. WHILE IT WOULD BE MORE POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE
TO USE U.S. MEANS TO CARRY OUT OUR OWN EVACUATION, WE MUST
FACE THE FACT THAT WE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE
IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC NOR ARE THERE ANY OTHER POLITICALLY
PALATABLE POWERS THAT DO. WITH CHAOS HERE AND COMMERCIAL
AIR OR OTHER ACCEPTABLE EVACUATION MEANS UNAVAILABLE, WE
COULD WELL HAVE TO ASK THE SAG TO AID US. SINCE IN SUCH
CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS PROBABLE OUR COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE
DEPARTMENT WILL BE NEITHER RELIABLE NOR SECURE, WE ARE
RAISING THE ISSUE BEFORE THE FACT AND REQUEST THE
DEPARTMENT CONSIDER IT AND FURNISH US GENERAL GUIDENCE.
PORTER

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